

## CLAIMS:

1. A device for receiving messages, the device comprising
  - a receiving unit (11) for receiving a message from a remote sender,
  - a clock (12) for keeping time,
  - a signal unit (13) for controlling an attention signal,
  - 5 - a control unit (14) for receiving user commands and for controlling functions of the device, which functions include a do-not-disturb mode, an alarm mode and setting a selected time for the do-not-disturb mode and/or the alarm mode,
  - a recording/playback unit (17) for recording the message at least during the do-not-disturb mode and for reproducing a recorded message,
  - 10 characterized in that the device comprises
    - a response unit (20) for providing an override function for the remote sender for overriding a mode set by the user by receiving a command from the remote sender.
2. A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the response unit (20) is arranged to
  - 15 provide a message to the remote sender, and/or to provide the override function by generating the attention signal immediately or at a specified time.
3. A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the receiving unit (11) is arranged to communicate with a voice network, in particular the telephone network, and wherein the
  - 20 signal unit (13) is used for controlling a ringer signal from the voice network, in particular suppressing the ringer signal during the do-not-disturb mode.
4. A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the receiving unit (11) is arranged to communicate with a data network, in particular the Internet.
- 25 5. A device as claimed in claim 4, wherein the signal unit (13) is used for generating the attention signal based on the content or number of messages received via the data network.

6. A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein the recording/playback unit (17) is arranged to reproduce the recorded message as the attention signal and/or to reproduce a summary of the recorded message.

5 7. A device as claimed in claim 4, wherein the recording/playback unit (17) is arranged to reproduce a vocalized version of the recorded message.

8. A method of receiving messages, the method comprising the steps of

- receiving a message from a remote sender,
- 10 - keeping time,
- controlling an attention signal,
- receiving user commands,
- controlling functions of the device, which functions include a do-not-disturb mode, an alarm mode and setting a selected time for the do-not-disturb mode and/or the alarm mode,
- 15 - recording the messages at least during the do-not-disturb mode, and
- reproducing a recorded message,

characterized in that the method also comprises the step of

- providing an override function for the remote sender for overriding a mode set by the user by receiving a command from the remote sender.

20

9. A computer program product for receiving messages, which program is operative to cause a processor to perform the method as claimed in claim 8.

10. A method of sending a message to a user, the method comprising the steps of

- 25 - making a connection to a user system for receiving messages as claimed in any one of the preceding claims,
- sending commands to the user system for overriding a mode set by the user for immediately reproducing the message or for recording the message and reproducing the message at a specified time, and
- 30 - sending the message contents.